

# **CITIZEN'S TRANSPORTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

## **Meeting Minutes July 24, 2003**

A Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC) meeting was held at the Arizona Department of Transportation, Board Room 145-147, Phoenix, Arizona on July 24, 2003 with Chairperson Roc Arnett presiding.

### **Members Present:**

Roc Arnett, Chairperson  
Dwight Amery, Member-at-Large  
Ron Gawlitta, Maricopa County District 3  
Jim Lykins, Maricopa County District 2  
Paul Schwartz, Maricopa County District 4

### **Members Absent:**

Tom Liddy, Maricopa County District 1

### **Others Present:**

Victor Mendez, ADOT Director  
Elizabeth Neville, ADOT  
Joe Warren, ADOT  
William "Blue" Crowley, citizen  
Steve Wilcox, DMJM-Harris, Inc.  
Doris Schwartz, citizen

Carolyn Deobler, ADOT  
Dan Lance, ADOT  
Bill Hahn, MCDOT  
D. D. Baker, citizen  
Edward Johnson, citizen

### **1. Call To Order:**

Chairperson Arnett called the Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m..

### **2. Approval of Minutes for May 20, 2003:**

Chairman Arnett called for a motion. Jim Lykins moved to approve the minutes of the CTOC meeting and Dwight Amery seconded the motion.

### **3. Staff Report:**

**Dan Lance, ADOT**, reported the following information:

- The July 2003 Certification will be published later this month. The Certification will include all program modifications approved by the Board.

- The MAG Transportation Policy Committee, in conjunction with ADOT and the Board, continues to work on the half-cent sales tax extension plan.
- Santan Freeway (202L) Dobson Road to Arizona Avenue: This roadway construction project was awarded to Edward Kraemer & Sons, Inc.
- US 60 – Grand Avenue at 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Maryland Avenue TI: This construction project was awarded to Edward Kraemer & Sons, Inc. and construction will begin in August.
- US 60 – Grand Avenue at 75<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Olive Avenue TI: This construction project was awarded to Pulice Construction and construction will begin in August.
- State Route 51 – I-10 to Shea Blvd (Design Build): Traffic restrictions continue due to the \$75M project to add HOV lanes in each direction, higher sound walls, rubberized asphalt pavement, and operational improvements. Ames Construction & Edward Kraemer & Sons are scheduled to complete construction in Spring of 2004.
- Santan (202L) – 56<sup>th</sup> Street to McClintock: Construction activity continues, and it should open to traffic late this year in conjunction with the other Santan projects on Loop 101 and I-10.
- Santan Freeway (Loop 202) I-10/Maricopa Road TI: Dirt excavation and pier building in the median will begin in mid-July. Pulice Construction expects to complete the \$12M project in Spring of 2004.
- Price (101L)/Santan (202L) TI: Excavation and drainage work continues, along with electrical and mechanical work in the pump house, retaining walls, and setting roadway lights and Freeway Management System.
- Grand Avenue (US 60) – 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue: This opened to traffic the last week of June. Miscellaneous curb, sidewalk and grading work is on-going.
- Grand Avenue (US 60) – 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue & 51<sup>st</sup> Avenue: Traffic restrictions continue as crews build bridge piers to support the new bridge that will carry Grand Avenue over the Camelback Road & 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue TI and a new bridge to carry 51<sup>st</sup> Ave. over the Grand & Bethany Home Road TI. Edward Kraemer & Sons is scheduled to complete the \$20.2M project in mid-to-late 2004.
- Red Mountain Freeway (Loop 202) – Gilbert Road to Higley: Final landscape design plans are underway. The advertisement date is being moved to next fiscal year in order to coordinate with City of Mesa's activation of their reclaimed water service to the project site.
- Red Mountain Freeway (Loop 202) – Higley to Power: 100% plans were submitted the end of June.
- Red Mountain Freeway (Loop 202) – 202/60 TI, Phase I: 100% plans are due this month (July 22).
- Santan Freeway (Loop 202) – Arizona Avenue to Gilbert: Design work is complete. Advertisement is planned for September.
- Santan Freeway (Loop 202) – Greenfield Road, Ray Road and UPPR Structures: Plans are complete. Advertisement is planned for August.
- Grand Avenue – 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue: Plans are on hold. City of Glendale has requested a work stoppage in order to consider Northern Avenue directional ramps.
- South Mountain 202L Corridor – Three alternatives were presented at a meeting in late June with the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) Districts 4, 6 and 7 Tribal Council members. The purpose was to get approval to look at three alignments on GRIC land:



The 105<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignment was eliminated for safety and operational deficiencies. A direct connection to 101L at 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue is being considered as well as 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the original 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue connections.

- Estrella Corridor 303L – Happy Valley Road to I-17: The Loan Mountain corridor has been adopted. Alignments within the corridor are being defined.
- Grand Avenue – 59<sup>th</sup> Avenue: A draft EA (Environmental Assessment) is underway.
- A draft resolution was prepared by the MAG Transportation Policy Committee and recommended to the Policy Committee for consideration. It was put on hold and will be re-addressed in September. The resolution is an attempt to get more attention on freeway maintenance funding problems and is based on the hybrid transportation plan's \$354 million allocation for freeway maintenance.
- A copy of a recap of the January 23, 2003 Transportation Policy Committee meeting was distributed for the Committee's review. The plan is moving forward, but is currently more than \$800 million over budget. We will see if the override can be reduced by reducing contingencies and fine tuning cost estimates.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Ron Gawlitta commented on the horrible conditions found on I-17, stating most of the garbage is made up of construction items that have fallen off trucks. He asked if any thought has been given to asking the Anthem homeowners association to develop a coalition of contractors who could work together to clean up the mess. Mr. Lance noted Mr. Lewis from Arizona Clean and Beautiful has been working with fast food vendors and major soft drink vendors on obtaining contributions to assist with cleanup efforts.
- Dwight Amery asked why higher sound walls are being constructed in areas where rubberized asphalt will be utilized. Mr. Lance said sound wall heights are the subject of a current controversy in Chandler. He stated noise wall heights are being adjusted as a result of the quieter pavement. In one neighborhood, the wall was extended about 1,600 feet, which satisfied most of the neighbors. The adjusted walls are 14 feet high, rather than 20 feet, and put decibel levels comfortably below 64.
- Mr. Gawlitta expressed his opinion there has been a lack of respect for citizen tax dollars, particularly along SR 51. He questioned whether the cable barriers, which are now being replaced with concrete barriers, provided any benefit. He asked why concrete barriers were not required from the beginning. Mr. Lance explained the concrete barriers would have cost eight to ten times more than the cable barriers. He said, while the goal is to install concrete barriers throughout the entire freeway system, they were challenged to immediately reduce the number of cross over accidents.
- Mr. Gawlitta asked when Northern Avenue is expected to evolve into a road of regional significance. Mr. Lance stated it is a long-term strategy in the hybrid plan, however, Glendale has identified matching funding for the corridor. He estimated realization of the super street to be 15 to 20 years in the future.



- Mr. Schwartz commented on the number of serious accidents that have occurred on the 303L between I-10 and Route 60. He asked if there are any plans to restore it to the freeway system or improving it to a four lane highway. Mr. Lance explained it was taken off the map because they did not project having adequate funding. The county has stepped forward in a sponsorship role for maintenance and continued development of the corridor. The hybrid plan allocates \$1.5 billion to build that facility as a full freeway.

#### **4. FY 2003-2004 CTOC Budget:**

**Carolyn Deobler, ADOT**, reviewed the FY 2002/2003 Budget Report, stating \$10,000 was allocated for Personal Services and \$10,998 has been spent to date. She said \$213,000 was allocated for Professional and Outside Services, however only \$10,994 has been spent. She reported all of the \$200 thousand set aside. In-State Travel remains available. Only \$3,417 of the \$10,800 allocated for Other Operating Expenses has been spent.

Ms. Deobler reviewed the proposed budget for FY 2003/2004. She stated the allocations for Personal Services and In-State Travel will remain the same, however, they are reducing the allocations for Professional and Outside Services and Other Operating Expenses to \$13,000 and \$5,000, respectively. She said the proposed operating budget for FY 2003/2004 totals \$28,200.

A motion to approve the budget as proposed was made by Mr. Gawlitta, seconded by Mr. Schwartz and passed unanimously.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Schwartz objected to the fact that expense money is not set aside in the budget for Committee members. Mr. Mendez pointed out most ADOT staff members attend after-hour meetings on their own time or, in some cases, in exchange for flex time.

#### **5. Status of the SR Loop 303 Project:**

**Bill Hahn, MCDOT**, updated the Committee on the status of the SR Loop 303 project. MCDOT is currently conducting a corridor study, south of Maricopa 85, to get an idea of possible routes heading south. The study will be completed at the end of September 2003 and will be followed by a public meeting. Regardless of the route ultimately selected for the Loop 303, both routes will be required in the future. A Design Concept Report was conducted from Maricopa 85 to I-10, taking the interchange between I-10 and the future 303L into consideration. The roadway between McDowell Road and Indian School Road has been improved to four lanes and right-of-way has been donated along the roadway from Indian School to Union Hills. Improvements have also been made at Indian School at the 303L to alleviate safety issues and all intersections at Northern and Olive will be widened in the next two months. In the interim, we are also doing a lot of law enforcement and looking at other ways to improve safety of the corridor. Construction of the sections from Bell Road to Reams Road and Reams Road to El Mirage Road has been completed and we are awaiting completion of construction between El Mirage and Lake Pleasant Road.



The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Lance reported they are approximately 15 months away from completing the study and evaluating the alternatives.
- Mr. Hahn confirmed for Chairperson Arnett that it is their intention to utilize the full \$35 million if, in fact, the 303L is designated as a full freeway. Mr. Lance explained the studies are looking at the ultimate freeway concept, as well as an interim phased construction strategy assuming all of the money may not be available in the necessary timeframe. He stated the bridge at Grand Avenue will be used as one-half of the ultimate freeway concept.

**6. Update on the Red Mountain Freeway Project:**

**Steve Wilcox, DMJM-Harris, Inc.**, reported on the status of the Red Mountain Freeway project from Power Road to University Drive. New half-diamond traffic interchanges are planned at McDowell Road, with ramps to and from the south. Each of the crossroads will go over the CAP canal, flood retarding structure, freeway and flood impoundment area. Three interchange configurations and four realignment options are being considered at McKellips Road and Brown Road to try to optimize the geometry of the interchanges. With regard to the CAP canal, the primary concern is that there be no impact on the canal's operations or any access impediments to McDowell Road, the Canal or Brown Road to service existing CAP turnout structures. All of the design features that cross the canal will have to be approved by the Central Arizona Water Conservation District and the Bureau of Reclamation. We will also be interfacing closely with the Spook Hill flood retarding structure. We will have to superimpose the freeway into the impoundment area, recreate the impoundment area to maintain the same level of flood storage volume, and design crossroads that provide hydraulic capacity to allow water to flow to the spillway without overtopping the structure. One of our goals is to reduce the frequency of storm event discharge that overtops the spillway, thereby reducing the Department's liability. The dam will be relocated at McKellips Road and McDowell Road because of the elevation of the crossroads. Two other issues have been brought up: SRP is looking at the impact increased discharges could have on the Granite Reef Dam; and the impact of the freeway on future recreational facilities. The City of Mesa, the Bureau of Reclamation and the County have designated the west right-of-way as a future trail, however, there is concurrence by all agencies that the future trail can be relocated into the flood retarding structure area.

The 15 percent design submittal is currently under review and a Value Engineering Study was recently completed. We will go out to the public at the end of August 2003 to present the alternative interchange configurations and crossroad alignments. We plan to submit our 30 percent design submittal in March 2004, which is on track for a 2007 freeway opening.

The following questions and comments were made:

- In response to Chairperson Arnett's question, Mr. Wilcox stated the project is being designed to provide for three additional auxiliary lanes and additional width for a future general purpose lane and HOV lane.



- Mr. Lance commented on the coordination with other agencies and the complex design issues involved in the project, stating it is the most complicated section of the entire freeway system to design.

Chairperson Arnett referred to the Certification Report, asking Mr. Lance to provide a brief update.

Mr. Lance explained the hybrid plan calls for system-wide HOV lanes, the Loop 303 from Maricopa 85 to I-17, and another freeway that would come off 202L near Hawes Road. It also includes money for widening of general purpose lanes on the loop systems, relieving some of the bottleneck points, and a concept of building a parallel freeway to I-10 to relieve east/west pressure from growth in the west valley. Studies are also underway for widening I-10 to Casa Grande and for improvements on I-17 to New River. Money is available in the program to widen from the AC/DC canal north of Dunlap on I-17 up to the 101L, however widening from I-10 to Dunlap will be much more expensive as the right-of-way is already filled out.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Gawlitta asked about improvements planned for the I-17 frontage roads. Mr. Lance said the City of Phoenix has committed to a continuous frontage road system from 101L to the 303L interchange. Mr. Gawlitta commented the plan still does not provide an escape valve in case of an accident. Mr. Lance agreed.
- Mr. Gawlitta asked how much study time is being devoted to researching an elevated light rail transportation system? Mr. Lance said light rail and elevated light rail were both considered as part of MAG's High Capacity Rail Study, but were ultimately rejected as alternatives. Mr. Gawlitta expressed his opinion they should bring people in over existing traffic and drop them in central Phoenix for distribution by an efficient collector bus system.
- Chairperson Arnett stated Phoenix is suggesting that the leg from I-10 to Elliott Road be postponed and that the money be used on I-17.
- Mr. Lance pointed out the plan does not mention future improvements on SR 74 or beyond the four lane roadway on the SR 85 corridor.

## **7. Call to the Public:**

**D. D. Barker, citizen**, spoke about the importance of having access to the meetings. She questioned the legality of MAG's rule that allows members of the public to speak only on non-agenda items during the Call to the Public, stating the Open Meeting Law allows individuals to address the public body on any issue within their jurisdiction. She said a lot of backroom conversations occurred at the last TPC meeting, contrary to the intent of the Open Meeting Law. She complained the meeting minutes are not always available through the Internet and asked if she would be able to obtain a copy of the minutes within three days of the meeting as required by the Open Meeting Law. She asked Chairperson Arnett to deliver her letter to MAG asking that they comment on their comment process, stating it really constricts public comments. She noted a previous comment she made to MAG pointing out the TIP and RPTA showed different

amounts, resulted in an adjustment in the programming of the light rail. She reported MAG is looking at whether or not their contract with Valley Metro can be extended past five years.

**William "Blue" Crowley, citizen**, expressed appreciation for the HOV lanes included in the plan, asking if ramps for the HOV lanes are also included. He spoke about the MAG vote and open meeting process, noting three police officers were present at the last meeting because of differences of opinion in the processes, development and use. He noted his previous request for a letter commenting on the Chairperson's acceptance of meals has not been addressed. He noted one of the police officers attempted to speak with him and followed him onto the elevator as he left. He pointed out 23 of the 27 miles of light rail will be located in Phoenix, asking how that could be considered a regional facility. He said bus and heavy rail systems will be necessary to support the light rail and freeway systems. He asked what will happen if the City of Phoenix goes for a weighted vote. He noted he was locked out of last month's meeting, stating it was a violation of the Open Meeting Law.

**8. Next Scheduled Meeting:**

Tuesday, September 16, 2003, 5:00 p.m.  
Arizona Department of Transportation Board Room 145-147  
206 South 17th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85007

**9. CTOC Member Reports:**

No reports were made.

**10. Closing Comments and Adjournment:**

Mr. Gawlitta expressed appreciation for the emails included with the minutes, stating the commentaries are full of wisdom and should be given more weight. He suggested that the people who conduct the next study on elevated systems check with Chicago and New York to find out what would happen if their systems were shut down. He said surplus properties should be rezoned according to the General Plan for the communities in which they reside before being disposed of at auction.

No other comments were made.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.